Research Proposal

Buying behaviour of Organisations with respect to training programs – A study.

Submitted by

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Guide

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Title

Buying Behaviour of Organisations with respect to Training Programs : A Study

Introduction

Here we are referring to Training Programs which are meant for working managers and employees. Basically it is topical and ranges from leadership competency to functional competencies. The leadership competency programs involve core and leadership qualities such as leadership abilities, visioning process, team leadership, decision making, conflict management, time and stress management, project management, motivation, communication skills, problem solving, interpersonal skills, where as the functional competencies are job-specific competencies that drive proven high-performance, quality results for a given position. They are often technical or operational in nature. These programs can be conducted on one off basis or can be run for a company throughout the year as per their TNI (Training need identification) needs. However normally each module does not exceed more than four days. Thus the classification of short term. Today undoubtedly education is valued in business world. It is generally found that on an average up to 30 to 40 hrs of training per year is required per employee. To fulfill these expectations many corporate hire trainers, create intranet and setup their own training institution or send their employees to outside seminars or training institutes. E-learning for training is also developing fast though of less magnitude presently. Additional to the MBA (full time post graduate program) education there is a strong trend in Management Development Programs (MDP), leadership training, executive coaching and mentorship. MDP's unlike the MBA can be more company specific which has an advantage like hands-on working, trade-tactical knowledge and application. Popularity has also grown greatly for education in business acumen, corporate learning programs created for sales people/supervisors and CEOs alike. These programs advance professionals in the terminology and workings of their specific industries and clientel. All of these factors coalesce for today's growth in training institute and internal mentorship programs. Growing demand for industry and company specific learning are a concern as more companies emphasize return on learning investment for their money spent. Metrics are growing in importance and the need to establish customer value will always drive education's selling ability. Because of these different forces (e.g. between business theory and application), program imparters must choose their approaches and positioning carefully.

New trends like "action learning" which is more physical and "hands-on" than the traditional audio and visual learning also have an impact on the MDP imparting organization.

It is found that in a city like Pune there are various training institutes ranging from personal trainers to training institutes to universities. These entities generally have their own course content, a faculty profile and pedagogy. On the other hand the companies seeking training have different approaches on HR policies regarding level and extensivity of training. This results in various programs offered and their actual relevance and need for the companies remains unclear. From the training institutes point of view there is a need to understand

market well and decide on a marketing strategy. From the company's point of view there is confusion on what should be taught and by whom and the results expected. Very often the results or the effect of the training program is not measured or evaluated. There is a certain need for this.

The idea of this research is to firstly study the environment and scenario of corporate/industrial training in Pune. Secondly to study the buying behaviour of organisations with respect to training programs and finally suggest a viable buying behaviour model.

The idea of this research has its genesis from the author's interest and experience in this area in Pune and the fact that he has been practicing in this field.

Objective of Study

- To understand the major factors influencing buying behaviour.
- To know and recognise the types of buying decision behaviour
- To understand how organisations make purchasing decisions and respond to purchasing.
- To understand how marketers analyse organisation decision making.

Scope of the Study

The study will be limited to Pune region and limited to non-governmental i.e. private organisations.

- To distinguish different organisations groups and to develop training modules that satisfy the needs.
- To understand how consumers make purchasing choices among various offers and training providers.
- To know how organisations will respond to different training module features such as pricing, content, promotion etc.

Methodology

The Methodology that will be applied to the study has been chosen in order to acquire information regarding the trends in Developing and Marketing Management Development Programs.
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In this part, the content includes the following topics: research design, population and sample, research tools, data collection, limitations of the study, data analysis, and the tentative results.

Research Design

A survey study would be conducted aiming to investigate the four components as mentioned above as well as to evaluate the contemporary situation.
This research will take an exploratory approach. According to Sekaran (2002:123) an exploratory study is undertaken when not much is known about the situation at hand, or when no information is available on how similar problems or research issues have been solved in the past. The aim will be to gain familiarity with the issues, and to gain a deeper understanding about the topic. For the purpose of this research, and in order to achieve the objectives, both primary and secondary data will be collected and will be used. The secondary data will contribute towards the formation of background information, needed by both the researcher in order to build constructively the project and the reader to comprehend more thoroughly the survey outcome.
Quantitative data would be collected through questionnaires. Individual interviews and focus group interviews would be conducted to obtain qualitative data.

Population and Sample

According to Black and Champion (1976), sample is a portion of elements taken from a population, which is considered to be representative of the population.
In order to collect primary data the questionnaire survey technique will be used. For the purpose of this study **stratified cluster sampling** will be selected. As Rescoe (1975) cites in Sakaran (2000:296), "sample sizes larger than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate for most research", the sample size will be decided appropriately.
The research setting in this study would be Pune city and adjoining region in the State of Maharashtra, India as there are a wide variety of companies and industrial sectors. The companies and sectoral composition in Pune is comparable to what is found all over India.
Data from the target group of companies and its employees would be obtained through questionnaire and interviews. The time spent in each group interview may vary from 10 to 30 minutes.

	Questionnaire sample size	Interview sample size	Approx. population size
Training Units			
a. Individual Trainer	10	3	100
b. Training Institute	5	2	30
c. Colleges	5	2	30
Corporate (HR/Training Manager)			
a. Government	10	3	50
b. Private -Small	20	------	5000
-Medium	20	-------	2000
-Large	50	10	500
c. Sector- Mfg.	50	10	---------
-Service	50	10	--------
Participants	200	-----	In Lacs
Teaching Faculty	50	10	1000

Research Tools

Questions for focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, as well as questionnaire would have to be designed. One expert each in marketing and one in conducting these programs would be consulted to validate the constructs and terms. Two research experts would be invited to review the questionnaires. Some unclear terms may have to be revised according to their suggestions.

Data Collection

Data would be collected for a six months period.

Qualitative data would be collected through focus group and in-depth interviews. The technique of personal interviewing is undertaken in order to reach the objectives since it is the most versatile and productive method of communication, enabled spontaneity, and also provided with:

"The skill of guiding the discussion back to the topic outlined when discussions are unfruitful while it has the disadvantages of being very costly time consuming and can introduce bias through desires of the respondent to please the interviewer" (Aaker & Day, 1990: 164).

For the purpose of this project semi-structured face to face interviews would be conducted involving the common interest groups. The choice will be based on researcher's knowledge about different educational levels among interviewees, their different professions and ages, which make imperative an adaption in questions so that they ensure the comprehension by the interviewee i.e., repeat, or rephrase the question.

The quantitative data would be collected in the form of a Questionnaire.

Cohen (1989) defines a questionnaire as a self-report instrument used for gathering information about variables of interest to an investigation.

For this study closed-ended questions would be designed in order to call for responses, which narrow down the field of enquiry, since the respondents choose among fixed responses. They also help the researcher to analyze easier the data since the responses can be directly compared and easily aggravated (Patton, 1990), they are versatile; surveys can be employed among people of all ages and they are replicated from one subject to another (Aaker & Day, 1990; Kotler, 1994) and many questions can be answered in a short time. It should also be noted that close-ended questions could lead to bias since respondents are offered limited alternative replies. Kostas E. Sillignakis – www.sillignakis.com

Limitations of the Study

Since the study is Pune based there are chances that it may not represent all India actuality. The questionnaire development may require more reliability as the research progresses. The time constraint in visiting all representative samples may become a problem.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data would be analyzed by the SPSS software program. Qualitative data would be analyzed by content analysis.

Expected Results

The results of this study based on quantitative and qualitative data analysis would be presented simultaneously as follows:

1. The hypotheses would be validated or rejected.
2. A model of buying behaviour w.r.t training programs would emerge.
3. This will help future practitioners and all stake holders.
4. It will help future researchers in this area by way of a framework.

Tentative Bibliography

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